DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 234 427 CS 207 886

AUTHOR Miller, Lance A.
TITLE How to Write: A Barely Annotated Bibliography. Research Report.
INSTITUTION International Business Machines Corp., Yorktown Heights, N.Y. Thomas J. Watson Research Center.
REPORT NO RC-9687-(#42784)
PUB DATE 15 Nov 82
NOTE 107p.
PUB TYPE Reference Materials - Bibliographies (131)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC05 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Computer Assisted Instruction; Computer Programs; Dictionaries; Educational Psychology; Elementary Secondary Education; Higher Education; Linguistics; Reference Materials; *Teaching Methods; Testing; *Writing (Composition); *Writing Instruction; *Writing Research
IDENTIFIERS Behavioral Psychology; Stylistics

ABSTRACT

The references in this bibliography tend toward practical or "how to" strategies for writing. The 718 references are listed alphabetically in the bibliography section, with each citation followed by a code denoting its topical categories: (1) general "how to write," (2) "how to write" business letters, (3) stylistics, (4) educational psychology, (5) basic psychology, (6) testing psychology, (7) computer software programs, (8) linguistics, and (9) reference sources. The same citations are then categorized according to these areas. (HTH)

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Research Report

HOW TO WRITE:

A BARELY ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Lance A. Miller

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Abstract: A bibliography of books and articles on "writing" is provided. The list is certainly incomplete, having a bias towards works with a "how to" slant, and having no annotations -- except for the rough classification of references into 9 categories. On the other hand, the list is reasonably up-to-date and comprehensive, and it widely samples the literature, from pure linguistics through the psychological and computer sciences and into publishing and desk manuals.

Keywords: Writing, language, linguistics, style, text, reading, critique.

This report was computer-entered and edited by Carol Johnson.

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USER NOTES

The EPISTLE project has as its goal the development of a variety of intelligent text-processing applications for the office and other environments. These applications include the critiquing of newly generated text with respect to grammar, punctuation, and style (Miller, 1980; Miller et al., 1981; Heidorn et al., 1982). In the development of these critiquing algorithms a number of technical sources on writing (and related subjects) are being consulted. The marked increase of research interest in writing and literacy suggests that a bibliography might be of general interest, and references to the sources we uncovered are published here. They are presented without annotations or comment other than their assignment to one of 9 topical categories. Their titles, however, are usually the best predictor of their contents. The list is certainly incomplete, with the bias very much towards including works which emphasize the "how to" aspects of writing.

In all, 718 references are listed in alphabetical order. Appended to the end of each reference is a one- or two-character code indicating the major topical category to which the reference is related. This code is at best only suggestive since almost all the references relate strongly to several topic areas. The 9 topic categories used are:

<H> General "How-To", covering a variety of subjects; the emphasis is always practical

<HL> "How-To", with special focus on business letters

<S> Stylistics

<PE> Psychological, sub-emphasis Educational; theory and data with strong teaching bias

<PB> Psychological, sub-emphasis Basic Behavior; usually solid experimental studies of general writing-related psychological behavior

<PT> Psychological, sub-emphasis Testing; primarily concerned with measuring readability but also includes people testing

<C> Computer Science, emphasis on software programs

<L> Linguistics

<R> Reference source: e.g., dictionary

Appended to the main list of references are 9 sub-lists, one for each of the above categories. Although this is redundant, in that a list of document numbers would have been sufficient, the result is somewhat more readable or usable -- an objective that we surely must be concerned with.

The basic technique for preparing the report was to pile numerous collections of books and articles, with checkmarks in their bibliographies, along with many hand-scribbled notes, on the desk of our secretary, Carol Johnson, over a period of several months. She then entered everything into a file, appended the category codes, and made the editing corrections. We are most indebted to her.

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